



Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy

MARCH 2009
E-NEWSLETTER
FOR THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY

U.S. Embassy Lisbon

Av. das Forças Armadas,
Sete-Rios
1649-044 Lisbon
Tel: 21-727-3300

American Citizen Services
Appts: Monday to Friday
8:15—9:45 a.m.
Mondays and Wednesdays,
1:30—3:30 p.m.
Tel: 21-770 2122
Phone hours:
Mon. to Fri. from 2:00pm to 4:00pm
E-mail: ConsLisbon@state.gov
<http://portugal.usembassy.gov/>

For emergencies concerning an
American citizen afterhours,
please call 21-727-3300.

U.S. Consulate Ponta Delgada

Av. Principe do Monaco
No. 6-2 F
9500-237 Ponta Delgada
Azores
Tel: 296-282-216

American Citizen Services
Hours: Monday to Friday
9 am—12:30 pm, 1:30—5 pm

U.S. Consular Agency Funchal

Rua da Alfandega, No. 10
2nd Floor, Rooms A & B
9000-059 Funchal
Tel: 291-235-636

American Citizen Services
Hours: Monday to Friday
9 am—1 pm



New Rule for Visa Waiver Travel to the U.S.



As of January 12th, the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) became mandatory. Citizens traveling under the Visa Waiver Program to the U.S. must receive an electronic travel authorization before traveling if they do not have a valid U.S. visa in their passport.

The ESTA program does not apply to American citizens or U.S. Legal Permanent Residents!

It's easy to apply for ESTA. The traveler or a representative can submit an application by Internet. It should be made at least 72 hours in advance of the trip. Once the authorization is received, it is valid for two years or until the passport expires.

And remember, there is no cost. Be aware of sites that offer ESTA services for a fee. To avoid these, you'll want to be sure that the site you use ends in ".gov" rather than ".com" or ".us".

Please [Click Here](#) to be linked to DHS's ESTA application site. It is also included on our Embassy webpage.

If an individual living in Portugal is refused ESTA, they can apply for a visa at the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon. Questions or concerns about an ESTA refusal? Please send an e-mail to VisasLisbon@state.gov.

March/April Holidays

The Consular Section will be closed for the following holidays:

March 20 — Annual staff training day
April 10 — Good Friday

PHONE LINE

21-770-2122

Our staff takes phone calls from 2 to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Outside those hours, we have a recorded Information Line for your convenience.

For emergencies, you will be connected directly to an Embassy official.

One-Time Payment for Federal Beneficiaries

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides for a one-time payment of \$250 to individuals who get Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security, Railroad Board and Veteran's Administration Benefits.

To receive the benefit, the beneficiary's address of record must be in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, or the Northern Mariana Islands.

Everyone entitled to a payment should receive it by late May 2009, and the funds will be delivered in the same manner as the regular benefits. **No action is required by the beneficiaries.**

Individuals will receive only one \$250 payment regardless of how many types of benefits they receive.

The [Social Security Administration](#) website has a special section on the economic recovery payment.

Visit our website to make an appointment for the American Citizen Services or Visa units.

It's easy and fast!

Portugal.usembassy.gov

The Tax Man Cometh

We've recently added some resources to our [Income Tax Assistance](#) page to help you survive the tax season.

Please check out the 2009 Tax Tips and Tax Booklet to learn more about issues relevant to taxpayers living overseas, such as average exchange rates for earnings, how to acquire a tax identification number, and where to go for help.



U.S. income taxes are due April 15, 2009. If you reside overseas, however, your return is due on June 15, 2009 because you are given an automatic two-month extension to file. Any tax due though must be paid by April 15, 2009 to avoid being charged penalties and interest.

Protect Yourself from Identity Theft

If you become the victim of identity theft, there are immediate, effective measures you can take to protect yourself and limit the damage.

We have posted a Diplomatic Security fact sheet on our [website](#) which discusses what one should do, including: 1) filing a police report; 2) filing an ID theft report with the Federal Trade Commission; 3) monitoring your Social Security statements; and 4) contacting the 3 major credit bureaus.

One way to keep an eye on your credit history is to request an annual credit report. Under the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACTA), an amendment to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, all consumers are entitled to a free annual report of their credit.

You can request one from the three major reporting agencies - Equifax, Experian and Trans Union. This is where banks and other places go to check your credit history and score. You'll only need to request it from one company since all three have access to the same information.



With your personal security, it pays to be aware!

Consular Fees

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------|----------|
| Passport | Adult Renewal | 61.00 € | \$75.00 |
| | Minor Renewal | 70.00 € | \$85.00 |
| | 1st time Applicant | 82.00 € | \$100.00 |
| | Lost/Stolen | 82.00 € | \$100.00 |
| Report of Birth Package | | 123.00 € | \$150.00 |
| Consular Certificate | | 25.00 € | \$30.00 |
| Notaries | 1st document | 25.00 € | \$30.00 |
| | 2nd Document | 16.00 € | \$20.00 |

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